



American Legion Post 1758 Newsletter

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American Legion Post 1758,
Junction, NY 12533

PO Box 92,

Hopewell

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Habitat for Veteran
- 2 Baaden takes Command
- 3 Free Tax Preparation
- 4 Reservse Retirees

Our next meeting will be March 12, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the Whortlekill Rod and Gun Club.

Upcoming St Jude's Solicitation

On Saturday March 2, we will again be collecting donations for St. Judes Children's Hospital. This has become an annual event for us and we have collected over \$4000 to help St. Jude's. We will be set up at the Stewart's Shop at the corner of Rte 82 and Lake Walton Road from 8:00 AM until about 3:00 PM.

Please come down and help us with this worthy event.

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

Elizabeth Kabler-Ross

Living space available for Veteran in need. *Do you know a homeless Veteran? Neil Klock has room in his home and is willing to take in a Veteran. Contact Neil at 845-227-6091*

Veterans Make the Connection

The Veterans Make the Connection website offers resources and support to help veterans manage the issues they may be facing and find solutions for improving their lives. The website offers resources whether you left the military decades ago or just recently transitioned to civilian life. For more information, visit the [Veterans Make the Connection website](#).

Hopewell Junction Post 1758 Sergeant at Arms, Mark R. Baaden, took command of the 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion in Mattydale, NY on February 10, 2013. Elements of the 403rd have been continuously deployed since 9/11/2001. Lieutenant Colonel Baaden has been deployed for over 4 years total to Iraq and Afghanistan between his three tours. His combat experience as a Company and Detachment Commander down range was a large factor in his selection for Battalion Command of the 403rd. He is humbled and honored to be selected to lead a highly decorated US Army Reserve unit with Citizen/Soldiers that have answered our Nation's call multiple times to fight the war on terror.





Good Of The Legion:

Sam Patton's name was pulled for the Pot Of Gold Drawing. Unfortunately Sam was not in attendance so the money is added to the Pot.

Free Tax Return Preparation

Week of January 28, 2013

The Internal Revenue Service's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) offers free tax help for Veterans. For more information, visit the Internal Revenue Service website at <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-for-You-by-Volunteers>.

OR

About AARP Foundation Tax-Aide

Since 1968, volunteer-based program has helped nearly 50 million low- to middle-income taxpayers

[AARP Foundation Tax-Aide](#), an AARP Foundation program, helps low- to moderate-income taxpayers have more discretionary income for everyday essentials, such as food and housing, by assisting with tax services and ensuring they receive applicable tax credits and deductions.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is available free to taxpayers with low and moderate income, with special attention to those 60 and older. Through a cadre of trained volunteers, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide has helped low- to moderate-income individuals for more than 40 years in every state and the District of Columbia.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is offered in cooperation with the IRS.

Special Notice: If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call this toll-free number 1-800-273-8255, available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.

SUICIDE PREVENTION 1-800-273-TALK
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

New Push to Make ‘Veterans’ of 200,000 Reserve Retirees

Lt. Cmdr. Jack Townsend, a Navy Reserve retiree in Richmond, Va., first became aware a decade ago that he wasn't considered a military "veteran" under federal law. It's been bothering him ever since.

Townsend was applying for a job when asked for a copy of his DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty," to prove veteran status. Townsend, who had earned his reserve commission through the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, didn't have a DD 214 because he never had served under active duty orders.

He did have his Navy Reserve retirement letter to verify 24 years of service. But employers are schooled to ask for the DD 214, proof from a job seeker of veteran status for completing a period of active duty service.

"It put me in a bad light," Townsend said.

Roger Miller, 60, of Denver, Colo., who retired from the Navy Reserve at the same rank also after 24 years, spent six of his years as an Air Force Reserve enlistee, loading cargo on aircraft that others crewed.

"I knew that to be classified a veteran you had to have 180 days of continuous active duty, not including basic training or tech school. I finished up tech school at 179 days," Miller said, just as the Air Force intended.

Non-veteran status didn't string Miller until years later when he applied for federal civilian positions that fit his experience well in television and mass communications. He couldn't, however, claim veterans' preference points and he lost those jobs to former service members with active duty time.

"People ask me, 'Are you a veteran?' I say well, yeah, I served 24 years in the Reserve so I consider myself a veteran -- even though the government doesn't." That's my answer to them," Miller said.

Townsend said it's illogical that the law denies Reserve retirees veteran status but they can draw military retirement at age 60, get [military health care](#), [shop on base](#) and the Department of Veterans Affairs even finds them eligible for certain benefits including [VA guaranteed home loans](#).

"The only thing I'm lacking," said Townsend, "is the paperwork."

After years of complaints by reserve component retirees, a change to their veteran status may be near.

The Military Coalition, an umbrella organization for 34 military associations and veterans' groups, is restarting a lobbying campaign for the new Congress and will push for passage of a bill to alter the definition of "veteran" for more than 200,000 Reserve and National Guard retirees.

The Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act will be re-introduced this month in the House by Reps. Tim Walz (D-Minn.) and Jon Runyan (R-N.J.), of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. Co-sponsors in the Senate will be John Boozman (R) and Mark Pryor (D), a bipartisan team from Arkansas, at least on this issue.

The House has passed this legislation twice. It died each time in the Senate on opposition from Richard Burr (N.C.), ranking Republican on the veterans affairs committee. Burr's staff could not be reached to comment. (continued)

But advocates say the senator is worried that extending veterans status to reserve component retirees would open the door to more benefits. Proponents say the bill specifically states that those to be honored as veterans in the bill “shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason” of it.

So there is no “nose under the tent” benefit issue that should worry Burr, say coalition representatives leading the fight for the bill. These ‘veterans,’ for example, would still not enjoy preference points in competing for federal jobs.

The Congressional Budget Office is persuaded, scoring the bill as “cost neutral.” Yet the coalition is working with sponsors to add more phrasing that would allay any remaining concerns Burr might have.

“To call yourself a veteran is one of the highest honors you can have after you leave the military. It’s an acknowledgement of one’s service,” said Anthony A. Wallis, with the Association of the United States Navy.

Most of the retirees targeted by the bill served in an era when it was commonplace to complete Reserve and Guard careers without active service. That’s almost unfathomable today given Guard and Reserve operations since 9/11.

“The population we are fighting for in this legislation is diminishing over time,” said Bob Norton, deputy director of government relations for Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). “These are mostly Cold War-era folks, people who served in Reserve and Guard units but before first Gulf War, and were never called up during their careers.”

But Norton noted there still are reserve component careerists serving today, including National Guard technicians, who prepare others for call up but are not mobilized themselves for overseas contingencies or national emergencies. So these members too would be honored as veterans if they reach Guard or Reserve retirement for serving at least 20 years.

Another reason Burr should not fear a benefit expansion, Norton said, is that every benefit provided to veterans is governed by its own restrictive language specifying who is eligible. None simply goes to “any veteran.”

The bill being drafted would only extend veteran status to reserve component retirees, not to many more thousands of Reserve and Guard personnel who left before earning retirement.

Some members of the coalition may see the issue differently, Norton said, but at MOAA “our feeling is that this honor really should be reserved for those who have completed a full career.”

Miller does feel differently. He thinks any length of honorable service should suffice, “whether six years in the Reserve or 24 years.”

“I would still like to be recognized as a veteran, officially by the government, because I did serve 24 years,” Miller added. “And if you have talked to other reservists you know that it wasn’t just that one weekend a month you did your duty.”

To comment write Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, or email milupdate@aol.com or twitter: Tom Philpott @Military_Update

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Habitat For Humanity for Veterans

I've been told that Dutchess County Habitat for Humanity has started the process to build two homes in Southern Dutchess County that they hope to provide to qualifying veterans.

The projects are in the early stages but they wanted to get the word out to Veterans. I gave them Nelson Rivera's contact information as the best way to reach out to all county veterans.

Hopefully they will keep me in the loop as things progress so keep this in mind in case you know a low income veteran. I do NOT know all the qualifications required but would expect that to be forthcoming as the projects move forward.

Sick Call

Dan Oberhauser has been suffering with a Hiatal hernia for some time and is headed for Vassar Brothers Hospital on February 25th for surgery.

Don Burns will be having knee replacement surgery on March 6th at Northern Westchester Hospital.

Please keep both of these gentlemen in your thoughts and prayers.

Venture Crew

The young men and women of our Venture Crew Shooting team will be in Cicero, NY this weekend (Feb 16 & 17) for a state match. Wish them well.

